 VERMONT DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES Family Services Policy Manual		<h1>121</h1>
Chapter:	Planning With Children and Families	
Subject:	Notification of Changes for Children in Custody	Page 1 of 3
Approved:	Frederick M. Ober, Division Director	Effective: 10/27/99 FINAL
Supersedes:	Casework Procedure 4200 & 4201	Dated: 8/1/94

Purpose

To inform caseworkers of the requirements to formally notify parents and others of changes important to the plan for the child. (See also Policy 123 on Review of Case Plan Decisions).

Policy

To ensure good communication with members of the child's treatment team, social workers should inform them as soon as possible of important changes in the child's living situation or the plan for the child.


In all cases, the worker must make a determination of the appropriateness of sending a notice. Notice requirements may be waived for casework or safety reasons. Change of placement notice is not required when the child is on a planned, temporary stay elsewhere, for example visiting with parents.

Failure to notify affected parties will not by itself prevent the social worker from taking the steps necessary to ensure the child's safety and well being, including the placement of a child in an appropriate setting. Lack of notice will not by itself prompt the removal of a youth once that placement has been made.

Notice to Parents: Change of Placement and/or Contact

Unless casework or safety issues prohibit this, parents of children in custody should know where their children are living. Social worker should discuss proposed changes of placement with them in advance, whenever possible. Written notice is a back-up measure to assure that notice has occurred.

Parents will also be notified of significant alterations in the pattern or plan for parent-child contact which will result in reduced contact with their child. Again, this notice should be verbal whenever possible, with written notice serving as a backup. When necessary to ensure the child's well-being, changes in the plan for contact may be made without advance

 VERMONT DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES Family Services Policy Manual		<h1>121</h1>
Chapter:	Planning With Children and Families	
Subject:	Notification of Changes for Children in Custody	Page 2 of 3
Approved:	Frederick M. Ober, Division Director	Effective: 10/27/99 FINAL
Supersedes:	Casework Procedure 4200 & 4201	Dated: 8/1/94

notice.

Notice to Substitute Care Providers: Change of Placement

Substitute care providers will receive written notice of a pending change of placement unless:


- They have requested the child's immediate removal.
- Their license has been suspended or revoked; or
- the provider is under investigation by the department based on alleged misconduct. In this last instance, the child will be moved when the local district office believes that the investigation will have a significant adverse impact on the child.

Notice to substitute care providers is not required in emergency circumstances. An emergency includes any situation which, in the opinion of the district office, places that child's health, safety, or well-being in immediate jeopardy.

Social Worker Tasks

Change of Placement

- At least 14 days prior to a planned move, or on the day following a child's move due to an emergency placement situation, sends notice to the child and his or her:
 - parent(s);
 - substitute care provider;
 - guardian ad litem;
 - the school the child will be leaving;
 - the Surrogate Parent Program Director
(Note: the Juvenile Defender's Office is notified of placement changes electronically.)
- Discusses situation with persons having questions about the proposed or already

 VERMONT DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES Family Services Policy Manual		<h1>121</h1>
Chapter:	Planning With Children and Families	
Subject:	Notification of Changes for Children in Custody	Page 3 of 3
Approved:	Frederick M. Ober, Division Director	Effective: 10/27/99 FINAL
Supersedes:	Casework Procedure 4200 & 4201	Dated: 8/1/94

made change of placement, attempting to resolve any disagreement. If this not possible, informs any persons who have appeal rights of that process.

Significant Change in Parent-Child Contact

- Promptly after a decision to change a plan for parent-child contact and immediately following change without prior written notice sends a Notification of a Change in Visitation (FS-251 or equivalent) to the child's parent(s) or guardian(s).